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The Ministry of Church Singers Part II

His Grace Bishop BASIL (Essey)

*Excerpts from a lecture given at the
Liturgical Singing Seminar, March, 1995
St. Luke Orthodox Church, Garden Grove, California*

Now, I would like to share with you some of the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and some homilies on the canons about chanting in Church.

The choir leads the congregation in prayer. The invitation to prayer is put out by the deacon or archdeacon. The deacon invites prayer, but the choir leads the congregation in the prayer itself. First I will share the words of St. Meletios the Confessor. He says:

“Prayer with musical chants and melodies, loudly voiced tumult and shouting is heard by men; but before God our Maker, the prayer which proceeds from a man’s conscience and God-imbued intellect stands before God as a welcome guest, while the former is cast out.”

There are choirs which make “loudly voiced tumult and shouting.” Yet I do not wish to imply, and I know that St. Meletios does not imply, that aesthetic beauty is the only criterion for chanting. Here is a little story. Once upon a time there was a Monastery of St. George, and the Abbott was blessed with monks that did not have such wonderful voices. The annual pilgrimage on the Feast Day of St. George was not all that impressive with the rather awful sounds coming from the choir. So the Abbott called together all the monks and said, “Look, this year I am going to invite the famous choir from the cathedral for the Feast.” Word went out and thousands of people came to St. George Monastery for the feast day and it was a glorious day. The famous choir from the cathedral was in great form and used its best voices. The Abbott was thrilled and even the humble monks who were not allowed to sing that day were thrilled. Follow-See “**MINISTRY**” on page 2

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Preparing to Sing in Church

Excerpted from “Sacred Music: The Choir”

*Published by the Department of Liturgical Music
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Every act or work of the Church requires preparation. Singing is clearly *no* exception. Singers need to prepare repeatedly for their task if it is to be fruitful and worthy. It is a great mistake for those who have sung in church choirs for many years to assume that by virtue of “tenure” they need no rehearsals, or that they need not prepare themselves spiritually. Every work, if it is to be a fulfilment, requires preparatory effort.

What are the specific acts of preparation for a singer?

a) First, technically: the singer must train his or her voice and keep it in good form. This can be done very simply by singing at home, during work and leisure. And the best thing to sing is the music of the Church. So doing, one not only keeps the voice in shape, but also praises God continually.

b) Every church choir has regular rehearsals throughout the year; if it does not, it should. It is the duty of all singers to be at rehearsals. Some parish choirs enforce the rule; those who do not rehearse do not sing at the services. This is obviously a good rule, but only if it is enforced consistently and without exception. If a parish choir does not rehearse regularly, the director should establish a definite weekday evening when he will always be there. He should rehearse whoever comes, even if some weeks he finds himself rehearsing only one or two sections. Eventually, as the singers are aware that there is definitely a rehearsal each week, no matter what, and that it starts exactly at the hour specified, no matter who is or is not there, then they will know that this task is serious. And they, the singers, must become serious, or else consider stepping aside and making room for someone else who is.

c) Because singing cannot really be independent of spirituality, the singers must all be involved in the central life of the parish, regularly partaking of the sacraments and actively engaged in one or more of the other aspects See “**PREPARATION**” on page 2

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ing the day’s festivities the monks went off to sleep, and the Abbott was sound asleep after all the excitement of the day. St. George came to him in his sleep and said, “Father, I think you missed my feast day! Today is my feast day and here you are, you didn’t do anything. Have I not blessed you this past year?” And the Abbott said, “Oh, Saint George, I do not know where you were, but we had a glorious feast today. How could you not be here?” St. George said, “I was in the church and I saw a great multitude of people, but I heard nothing.”

You and your choir need be as aesthetically perfect as you are able. God not only expects, but He accepts only our best. If your best sounds like “a loudly voiced tumult and shouting”, but it is indeed your best, then God hears you, and St. George does too.

Here is a quote from St. Anatoly Zertsalev of Optina, written to a new choir member. “The fact that you have started to chant is not important. The roosters out on the farm sing like anything. They will drown you out right away. But you are not a rooster, and you are not a hen. You have to remember that your singing should not be like that of a rooster, but like that of angels, that is done, with humility, fear, ardent love, and self reproach. Such is true and God-pleasing chanting. But the vainglorious kind, designed to please not God but men, is worse than that of roosters. And this is precisely what you did not specify for me, that is, whom did you come closer to in imitating, when you chant, the angels or a hen?”

St. Simon the founder of Simonos Petras Monastery on Mt. Athos says that “at the church services we should chant with solemnity and devoutness, and not with disorderly vociferation.”

And St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain counsels us, saying, “The psalmody which takes place in the church is an entreaty to God. Now he who makes an entreaty and prays must be in a state of humility and contrition, whereas an unduly loud voice manifests audacity and irreverence.”

One of the techniques that many chanters and choirs use is attempting to interpret to the congregation what the text means. Very loud at one point and very soft at another point, then slow, then fast. That is as artificial as controlling the emotions of those who stand in our churches by dimming the lights or turning them on bright. Your task is to sing, not to interpret. The Holy Spirit is the One who will lead us into the knowledge of all truth, not the choir director or the chanter.

Again, he who prays “must be in a state of humility of contrition.” According to Saint Nikodemos, a sign of humility and contrition is that one does not chant or pray with an “unduly loud voice”, interpreting the text. He says, “Chanters should psalmodize in a reverent and orderly manner, with fear of God and piety and contrition.”

“Pray gently and calmly. Sing with understanding and rhythm. Then you will soar like a young eagle, high in the heavens,” wrote St. Evagrius.

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of the Church—educational, charitable, and missionary. There is in the regular sacramental participation a “built-in” preparation for the services. A singer so engaged would hardly be inclined to consider either his musical task or the music itself as an end in itself.

d) Any involvement in the corporate prayer of the Church requires of every faithful member the cultivation of a personal prayer life. Either aspect, corporate or personal prayer, without the other can lead to distortion. The church singer who faithfully prays at home will always be prepared to join with others in the public worship. The one who neglects his prayer life at home will inevitably become a hindrance in the Church.

e) It is not possible to walk from the world into the Church and immediately begin to sing “with attention and compunction.” A period of time for adjustment is necessary: a time of quiet prayer. It is spiritually disastrous for singers to arrive late or just as the Service is beginning, and attempt to sing. It seems those who are late are habitually late; they need to repent of this and begin to establish the habit of arriving early. Just as those who serve the Altar need a period of quietness before they begin to serve, so too the singers, for it is the same Holy and Almighty God who is served in the choir loft as in the Altar.

f) Our age is a secular and hyperactive age. Few people, including choir members, find their way to the Church more often than on Sunday morning. Yet the singers, if they take seriously their calling, cannot be *Sunday Christians*. All members of the choir should consider it their duty to be present at all the Services of the Church. In everything that has been said above, it is clear that church singers must be zealous lovers of the Church and its sacred services. They must develop a sense of values in which the Church is first and highest and most precious, so that they are able to lay aside all other considerations and be present on every Lord’s Day, at every Vigil or Great Vespers, and every Great Feast. If this is *unrealistic*, then the question must be asked, why was it possible for Orthodox believers in cultures where working hours were much longer and the word *leisure* was unknown, to come to every Saturday evening Vigil, every Sunday Liturgy, and every Great Feast? The problem in our culture is surely not *time*, but *values*.

Finally, if one really enjoys the experience of worship, then the moment which marks the end of one service is the beginning of anticipation for the next. At the end of each divine Service the faithful believer gives thanks to God for the encounter that has just taken place. Then begins the joyous anticipation of the next gathering of the Body of Christ. It is just as important to follow the services with prayer and thanksgiving as it is to precede them with prayer and repentance. Singers, above all, should cultivate such an all-encompassing spirituality, so that in both their singing and in their life, God may spread through them “the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere” (2 Corinthians 2:14). ✚

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“He, the church singer, should chant without hurrying and without dragging, and he should pronounce the words clearly and distinctly. He should chant simply and reverently in a monotone, without expressing his feelings by modulations and changes of voice. Let us leave the holy prayers to act on the listeners by their own spiritual power. The desire to convey to the bystanders one’s own feelings is a sign of vanity and pride.” St. Ignatius Brianchaninov continues, “The singing should be begun and ended all together. Moreover, the hands should not be waved in a distracting manner.” You should not do in the choir loft or the choir area, that which you would not do in the sanctuary. “The hands should not be waved in a distracting manner, and on no account should there be any moving around. The members should go in order quietly, one after the other, without pushing or hurrying one another.”

St. Elias the Presbyter counsels us, saying, “When through continuous prayer the words of the psalms and hymns are brought down into the heart, then the heart like good soil begins to produce by itself, various flowers: roses, the vision of the incorporeal realities; lilies, the luminosity of corporeal realities; and violets, the many judgments of God, difficult to understand.” These are the gifts, the graces that come to the church singer who sings with humility and contrition, who leaves aside his or her own personality and idiosyncrasies.

If indeed we are singing with the angels, listening to their voices and melodizing with them, then we know that the responsibility for conveying the import of the text does not rest upon our shoulders at all. That is not to say that we can mumble. The Fathers that we have heard say that we should chant with understanding, distinctly and clearly. But we do that because we wish to show respect to the text, not because we are trying to tell the congregation what the hymn is about. We are not there in positions of teachers, the Church says. We show respect to the text, not to the hearer. Our first concern is the text, the holiness of the words themselves. And if we do that the hearers will hear. They will be given all the tools necessary to understand the mysteries which are encompassed in the holiness of the text. And yes, the words are holy. And the sheets of paper that have music on them are holy, just as holy as a paper icon. Words have power. And “The Word” is the title given to the Son of God Himself. The words and the music both have power. They have a holiness. The spoken word is a gift given to us, and given to none of God’s other creatures. And it is a gift that we must perfect, the gift of speech, the gift of communication, and the gift of music. It is a gift that we perfect and offer back to God as a spotless sacrifice and a pure offering, to our God who gave us the gift of words and music to begin with.

Q: Should the first antiphon and cherubic hymn be sung in the same manner?

A: That is a good question, but I will speak about the interior attitude in the church singer. The music need

be tasteful, beautiful and non-intrusive, so the liturgy flows. And again the flow is important, not so much because a break in the flow would be disruptive to those who hear, but that it would be cacophony at the throne of God. The object of our worship is not the congregation but God Himself, and we do things well for Him. Everyone else may benefit, but they cannot be and must not be our consideration. Our consideration is that we offer God our best. That means: the best in sound, the best in taste (which may vary a lot, but that is fine.)

Q: What about dynamics and choral interpretation?

A: If they are done to make things more beautiful and not merely to express your own personal taste, then they are fine. There are some things that just naturally take a crescendo. It comes from the text in music that is well written. Where the music and the text marry, they are not obtrusive to each other. If they are a loving couple, the music does not need much external “mood setting”. It does it by itself, especially if one chants with understanding and contrition. Submit yourselves to the text. Choir singers submit yourselves to the director. Directors submit yourselves and the choir to the text.

Q: How do we find the balance between wanting it to be beautiful, but not going overboard?

A: What is one’s motivation for doing it? When I was at a monastery on Mt. Athos, they had no choir. But they had a chanter that was out of this world. It was a three hour Orthros with a one hour Liturgy and Fr. Theodore had been chanting for four hours. *It was gorgeous.* He had the most beautiful church voice; it wasn’t some ‘Frank Sinatra’ voice. We’ve got plenty of those. I mentioned to one of the monks afterwards how blessed the monastery is to have Fr. Theodore. He said, “Excuse me, but he distracts us from our worship. We would start saying, ‘That was beautiful.’” What is our best and what is beautiful? Our best must be objectively discerned. Beauty is subjective to taste. That’s a way out of not answering the question, but I really don’t know how to answer it.

Q: How can we hear the voice of the angels?

A: That is not a hard thing to answer, but it is a hard thing to do. The way that we may hear them is to become childlike when we stand before God. Children can hear angels speak. Children see angels, and that is how we are told to be, like little children. Too often rather than being childlike, we become childish. To become childlike is to be innocent, to stand before God in the spirit of humility, and contrition, laying aside our own likes and dislikes, and our personality, if you will. Age or education does not necessarily mean that you cannot be childlike anymore.

There is a young man whom I have known since he was a teenager. He went on to law school and is now a very successful attorney. When he was about twenty-seven we met at a church gathering, and he asked if he could spend some time with me alone. We went off to the side, and he said, “You know, Fr. Basil, I am very

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disturbed because I do not see my angel anymore. I used to see my guardian angel by my bed every night. And I do not see him anymore, not for the past three months.” Here is a young man who, despite his sophistication, maintained his childlike innocence, when it came to things of God, until he was twenty-seven. Then something happened. What was especially beautiful about his attitude was his naïveté. For twenty-seven years, he believed that everyone must, like him, see his guardian angel. He did not think that it was anything unusual. What he thought unusual was that he was not seeing it anymore!

We can see the angels if we live with them, if we attune our ears to their voices, and focus our eyes on seeing them. They are there. Just because we do not see them, or do not hear them, does not mean they are not there.

Here is a canon that deals with church singing and church singers. It is from the 75th Canon of the Council in Trullo that took place in the 7th century (691-692).

“We wish those who attend church for the purpose of chanting neither to employ disorderly cries and to force nature to cry out loud, nor to introduce anything that is not becoming and proper to a church; but on the contrary, to offer such psalmodies with much attentiveness and contriteness to God, Who sees directly into everything that is hidden from our sight. For the sons of Israel shall be reverent (Lev. 15:30), the sacred word has taught us.”

There is that word again, contriteness or contrition. Either humility or contrition has come up in almost every quote. Not only the ones that I am presenting, but all the ones I could find, from the Holy Fathers and from the canons. At our rehearsals, and our sessions with choirs, we talk about promptness, generally, and about dedication, both of which are important; but we need also speak about humility and contrition. If we take a poll of the Fathers those are the two characteristics that seem to be most important for church singers. Humility and contrition. They did not say anything about a beautiful voice. Did you notice that? It has to be orderly; it has to start together and stop together. That is a good thing for choirs. Blend your voices, another good and very practical thing. But sing with humility and contrition, that is the most important thing.

Now about forcing nature, here is famous commentary on Canon 75. “The chanting, or psalmody, that is done in churches is in the nature of begging God to be appeased for our sins. Whoever begs and prayerfully supplicates must have a humble and contrite manner. But to cry out manifests a manner that is audacious and irreverent. On this account, the canon commands that those who chant in the churches refrain from forcing their nature to yell, but also from saying anything else that is unsuitable for the Church. But what are the things that are unsuitable for the Church? The expositor Senoras replies that there are womanish members and war-

blers (which is the same as saying trills and an excessive variation or modulation in melodies which inclines towards the songs sung by harlots). The present canon, therefore, commands that all these things be eliminated from the Church, and that those who chant therein shall offer their psalmodies in great care to God. Who looks into the hidden recesses of the heart, into the psalmody and prayer that are framed mentally in the heart rather than uttered in external cries. The sacred words of Leviticus teach us, ‘sons of Israel’, to be reverent before God. That is why divine Chrysostom says that these things (meaningless utterances, singing words that either make no sense, or singing without understanding) are natural, not to those who are engaged in doxologizing God, but to those playing, and mingling the sport of demons with angelic doxology. By means of many arguments he, Chrysostom, teaches that we ought to offer up doxologies to God with fear and a contrite heart, in order that they may be welcome, like fragrant incense.”

The common thread that runs through these quotes is the need for humility and contrition. To be humble will be a struggle. We cannot buy humility; we cannot merely appear to be contrite. Humility and contrition are states of the heart and soul, that then manifest themselves in the behavior of body and attitude, and words, and psalmody. They are things that we need work on individually. There is no choir practice to rehearse humility. I wish we could! We cannot have a rehearsal for joint contriteness. When choir members come together in individual humility and individual contriteness, we offer up corporate doxology that He hears and that St. George would hear. Something that is an acceptable sacrifice, an acceptable oblation before the throne of God. Brothers and sisters, you have been gifted by God with an angelic gift. Using your voices for His praise is a gift given to you and not to everyone. It is a gift given to you but a gift which you share with the angels and the archangels. Make yourself worthy, by His grace, of that gift, and be worthy of the calling to which you have been called. Not to lead the congregation in prayer; that is secondary. Not to make a beautiful atmosphere for liturgy; that is tertiary, way down the list. But to offer up acceptable glorification before the throne of God, an oblation that He will receive upon His heavenly and ideal altar. An oblation then, like our oblation of bread and wine, which He will in turn offer back to us. When He accepts your offering, He does not keep it. He will take it, transform it, and send it back to touch the hearts, and the minds and the souls of you and your congregants. He will do that. You do not have to worry about doing it. If He can make bread into Flesh and wine into Blood, know that He can make your psalmody into an instrument of the Spirit, which can lead you and your fellow congregants closer to Him. Let Him be the only object of your worship, the only object of your praise, the only object of your glory. Then you cannot help but be humble and contrite, standing and considering and seeing only Him. ✚

RESOURCES

Resource Guide for the Orthodox Liturgical Musician

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The title *Russian Church Singing, Volume 1: Orthodox Worship and Hymnography* by Johann von Gardner implies that this book is of interest only to practitioners of Russian-styled church singing. However, this book would fascinate anyone interested in the liturgical music or worship of the Orthodox Church, no matter their level of expertise. The author's original dedication of the book "to all the faithful workers in the field of Russian liturgical singing," has been expanded by the translator, Dr. Vladimir Morosan, to include all workers in the field of Orthodox liturgical singing in the Western world.

Russian Church Singing is a compilation and reworking of Dr. von Gardner's lectures which he presented between 1954 and 1972 at the University of Munich. While some of the same topics are covered in the supplementary material found in the Festal Menaion, this book is specifically written with a musical perspective. Expertly translated from Russian by Dr. Morosan, himself an authority in the field of Russian liturgical music, Volume 1 consists of four chapters as well as translator's and author's prefaces. In the first chapter Dr. von Gardner poses the question: "What is Orthodox liturgical singing in essence, and what role does it play in Orthodox worship?" Answering his own question he states that liturgical singing itself is one of the forms of Orthodox worship, citing examples of the interchangeable usage of the terms "singing" and "worship." The chapter concludes with a description of the categories, types, and organizational system of hymns and the various styles of performance. Chapter Two is an examination of the order and cycles of services including an analysis of the various types and the musical tension curves of these services. Chapter Three deals with the various Russian chant systems, their notations and the books in which they are contained. The fourth and final chapter is a brief outline of the periods in the history of Russian church singing. While the final two chapters deal specifically with Russian singing, one can learn a great deal about the evolutionary nature of church singing in general.

This book is well written and organized, and the conclusions are logical and supported by fact. It is clear that this book is based on a great deal of research, evidenced by the copious references to writings of a variety of sources from early Church Fathers to scholars of both the Eastern and Western Church. However, both the author's and translator's prefaces refer to an appendix which contains a partially annotated bibliography. It unfortunately does not appear in this book. But since only Volume 1 has thus far been published, one can pre-

sume that this appendix is to appear in a subsequent volume. Since sixteen years have elapsed since the publication of the initial volume, it might have been prudent, in hindsight, to retain the bibliography as Chapter Two (as it appeared in the German version of this work) in order not to delay the dissemination of this valuable information. However, this is one more reason to anticipate the publication of the rest of the translation of this monumental work.

Despite the high degree of accuracy of this fact-filled book, there are two points which should be clarified. On page 58 it states that the cycle of tones of the Octœchos ceases during weekdays in Great Lent and only continues on Sunday until the fifth Sunday of Lent. This is not entirely true—the Saturdays of Great Lent should also be included, since some of the hymns sung at Friday vespers (Pre-sanctified Liturgy) and at Saturday matins are prescribed to be sung in the tone of the week (except the Saturday of the Akathistos). On page 95 it states that the Pre-sanctified Liturgy begins in the same manner as daily vespers except the 8th Kathisma of the Psalter is almost always taken. This is probably a typographical error, since the 18th Kathisma is always taken except during the fifth week of Great Lent.

Russian Church Singing, Volume 1 is so dense with valuable information that one cannot possibly retain it all at the first reading. This highly informative book deserves to be read and re-read, and each time you will be rewarded with greater knowledge and understanding of Orthodox church singing. ✚

Ask the Choir Master...

Q. In the liturgical texts I've seen references to special melodies. What can you tell me about them?

The musical organizational system of the Orthodox Church is based on the Octœchos (Book of Eight Tones). Most hymns have a tonal designation telling us to what melody the hymn is to be sung. Each "tone" is subdivided into melodic patterns for specific types of hymns—stichera, troparia, prokeimena, and irmosi. A further subdivision contains additional "special melodies" for these hymn types, most often stichera, though not exclusively. These melodies called *automela* in Greek (*samopodobni* in Slavonic) are known by the first words of the hymn text, e.g. "O marvellous wonder..." or "You rose from the tomb on the third day...." At one time they were not only prototypes melodically, but metrically as well. However in the translation of the texts from Greek to Slavonic and subsequently to English, the metrical link has been broken. Hymns based on these "special melodies" are called *prosomoia* in Greek (*podobni* in Slavonic). For a more detailed explanation please refer to Gardner's *Russian Church Singing, Volume 1*, pp.53-55.

Although "special melodies" in the past have fallen

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New Publication: Peter Tchaikovsky - The Complete Sacred Choral Works

Musica Russica, a publisher specializing in Orthodox choral music, has announced the publication of *Peter Tchaikovsky—The Complete Sacred Choral Works*, the newest volume in its critically acclaimed series, “Monuments of Russian Sacred Music.” The 600-page volume, handsomely case-bound with gold-stamped scrollwork on the cover, retails for \$85.00. Inside are new editions of the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, op. 41, the *All-Night Vigil*, op. 52, and ten additional liturgical choruses, as well as the “Hymn to SS. Cyril and Methodius” and “A Legend”—non-liturgical settings of sacred poetry. The critical apparatus features a comprehensive article on Tchaikovsky’s sacred choral works by editor Vladimir Morosan, and detailed editorial notes. A special feature in this particular volume is an introductory article by liturgical scholar Dr. Paul Meyendorff entitled “Russian Liturgical Worship,” which presents a detailed discussion of the structure of the Divine Liturgy and the All-Night Vigil as services, apart from their musical development.

Many readers of this newsletter may, logically, ask the question: Why would today’s Orthodox church musicians in America be interested in the sacred choral works of a 19th-century Russian composer? In point of fact, some of Tchaikovsky’s sacred works are quite well-known in Orthodox parishes of non-Slavic background; his *Liturgy* was one of the first complete settings to be translated into English, back in the 1940s by V. Rev. James C. Meena of the Antiochian Archdiocese. But the main reason why American Orthodox church musicians might be interested in Tchaikovsky’s works is because he, more than any other composer, shaped and influenced the choral church music sung in a great many of our churches.

Tchaikovsky’s first contribution to the field of church music was to compose out of his imagination (using no chant melodies) a complete musical cycle of the *Divine Liturgy*, at a time when most services were strung together from a “potpourri” of different chants and hymn settings by various composers. By doing this he opened the floodgates for free composition of liturgical music by Russian secular composers of his day. Many composers, including Gretchaninoff, Arkhangelsky, and Rachmaninoff, followed his example. The composition of complete Liturgies continues to this day, particularly among composers in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

Three years later, Tchaikovsky made his second contribution to church music—his *All-Night Vigil*, in which he became the first major Russian composer to turn his attention to harmonizing the ancient unison chants for four-part mixed chorus. Once again, a great many composers followed his example—Kastalsky,

Chesnokov, Nikolsky, and Rachmaninoff, to name a few—and, likewise, these efforts continue to this day (e.g., chant arrangements by F. Karam, Fr. J. C. Meena, F. Desby, M. Kovalevsky, B. Ledkovsky, and others).

Thus, anyone who seeks to understand the origins of a great percentage of Orthodox church music sung today—from free compositions to chant harmonizations—will benefit greatly from studying and getting to know Tchaikovsky’s sacred works. In the new edition, the original Church Slavonic texts are accompanied by phonetic transliterations and English translations, making the music accessible to non-Russian musicians. All the individual hymns in the collection are also available in individual octavo offprints for practical performance.

The Complete Sacred Choral Works of Tchaikovsky may be ordered directly from Musica Russica, 27 Willow Lane, Madison, CT 06443, by phone: 1-800-326-3132, fax: 1-203-421-3132, or e-mail: rasmuscat@musicarussica.com. ✚

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into general disuse, there is a renewed interest in America in the restoration of this part of the Orthodox musical heritage. Not only do these melodies add more colors to the “musical” palette, but certain melodies help link hymns with a common theme, for example the Tone One melody, “O marvellous wonder...” which is often used for feasts of the Theotokos (Dormition of the Theotokos, automelon), Nativity of the Theotokos, Protection of the Theotokos, and Entrance of the Theotokos). From a practical standpoint, these melodies can successfully be sung by a small group of singers, either in unison, with ison, or 4-parts. A more comprehensive article on this topic will appear in a future issue of PSALM Notes.

Q. As a choir director, sometimes I find my choir in too much of a performance mode. Do you have any thoughts on how I can alleviate this?

Stress to them that singing is prayer. Remind them that the singers are to lead the singing and to draw the congregation into the worship, not to entertain them or impress with their technical prowess. On the other hand, the singing must be done in an orderly manner and not poorly using the excuse “that’s the best we can do.” Saint Augustine said “He who sings prays twice.” This is certainly true, but it implies that it is to be done well; poor singing can destroy the proper spirit of prayer, while good singing is edifying and enhances prayer. Rehearsal is an important element in preparing your singers to sing the services. In addition to preparing them musically, explain to them what is happening liturgically and theologically. If you are not comfortable in doing this ask your parish priest to help by occasionally coming to rehearsals to lead a short discussion. The better your singers are prepared, the less they will need to concentrate on the mechanics of singing, thus allowing them to concentrate on the task at hand: leading the sung prayers of the community. ✚

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Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pennsylvania
Michael Farrow, Vienna, Virginia*

The 1996 Music Institute, held in August of 1996, had as its theme, "Let Us Lay Aside All Earthly Cares" and focused on the meaning of the Cherubim Hymn. The guest speaker was the V. Rev. Fr. Sergei Glagolev of the Orthodox Church in America. After 10 years of Annual Music Institutes, this Institute marked a change in format in which the morning session was combined for chanters and choir with breakout sessions in the afternoon. Over 100 attendees at this Institute participated in joint sessions of new music (Fr. Glagolev); sessions learning four new Cherubim hymns, including a congregational version (Leila Corey, James Meena, Paul Jabara, and Albert Hazeem); classes for Beginning Conducting (Lexie Damos) and Advanced Conducting with Expression (James Meena); Chanting for Chanters and for Choirs (Fr. Elias Meena and Joyce Black). They also attended lectures on "Sacred Music, A Tool for Evangelism" (Al Mamary), "Singing Techniques" (Philip Howley), "Vocal Techniques for Breathing for Chanters and Choir" (Albert Hazeem); "Singing and Directing Unmeasured Music" (Fr. Glagolev). His Grace, Bishop DEMETRI, spiritual advisor of the Sacred Music Department of the Antiochian Archdiocese spoke on the new directives within the Archdiocese and offered guidance and advice to the participants. All attendees participated in Morning Prayers, Matins, Vespers, a Vespereal Divine Liturgy and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with emphasis on the Feast of the Dormition. ✚

St. Vladimir's Summer Institute 1996

Bonnie Maye-Schwarz, Rochester, New York

I am obviously a fan of the Liturgical Institute of Music and Pastoral Practice at St. Vladimir's Seminary, having attended it for 11 years now. I always find it to be a spiritually enriching and renewing experience as well as a musically educational one. This year in particular I think the music faculty outdid themselves, offering excellent lectures and significantly more "Practica" sessions than in the past. I came away from the music sessions with the beginnings of many new skills and a wealth of knowledge to be digested over the course of the next year.

The liturgical music lectures covered a wide range of relevant topics: "The Integration of Word and Music in Byzantine Chant" (a helpful introduction to the structure of the chant by guest speaker, Dr. Jessica Suchy-Pilalis); "Analysis of Selected Liturgical Hymns" (I attended sessions which focused on Tchaikovsky's liturgical compositions—fascinating and useful); "The Choir Rehearsal: Planning, Preparation, and Rehearsal Techniques" (excellent—I have referred to my notes of

this lecture many times in preparing rehearsals) and "The Communion Hymn: Origin, Development, and Contemporary Practice" (enlightening and very useful!).

Practica sessions were given on a wide variety of topics and for a range of skill levels. I attended two sessions each on Vocal Techniques, Conducting, and Composition, all of which were excellent. The Vocal Techniques sessions focused on how to teach a choir to develop a unified blended sound, and why this is important for liturgical singing. Practical techniques to improve vocal quality and to address various vocal problems were also given. The Conducting sessions concentrated on specific conducting gestures the director could use to communicate his or her intent clearly. Participants were given the opportunity to practice the techniques in the friendly, helpful atmosphere of fellow struggling conductors. In the Composition practica, the process of analyzing the pattern of accents in a text and then composing to honor this pattern was discussed. Also, techniques to compose refrains for assembly singing (specifically Communion Psalm refrains, to tie in with the lecture on the Communion Hymn) were presented and tried out (quite successfully!) by the participants. Other practica that were offered included Byzantine Chant, Rubrics, (which this year concentrated on the Matins service), The Eight Tones, and Church Reading.

In addition to all the excellent instruction, there are two other aspects of the Institute that are particular highlights for me. First, being able to participate in the liturgical cycle of services for the week and to work together with the other musicians to bring beauty to these services. And second, the fellowship of studying and worshipping with Orthodox Christians from all over the world. Each year I come away with a wonderful sense of how connected we all are. ✚

12th Annual Sacred Music Institute Announces 1997 Program

The Music Institute sponsored by the Sacred Music Department of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese and chaired by Ray George, choir director of the St. George Orthodox Church, Troy, Michigan, has announced that its 1997 symposium/workshop and meeting will be August 21-24, 1997 at the Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pennsylvania. The guest speaker will be Fr. David Barr, pastor of Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church in Tuscon, Arizona and Director of the St. Romanos Chanters Program for the Western Region. Fr. Barr will present a series of lectures and workshops on integrating Byzantine Chanting and choral works for small and large choirs. This Institute will feature a new format and speakers.

Individuals interested in the 1997 Music Institute should contact Fr. George Geha at the Antiochian Village (412-238-3677) to be placed on the mailing list for future more detailed announcements. ✚

See "CONFERENCES" on page 12

Cheroubicon

for the Sacred Music Institute, Ligonier, Pennsylvania
August 15, 1996

Sergei Glagolev
— on Znamenny themes

Slowly

We — who mys-tic' - ly re - - - pre - sent, re - pre - sent the

The first system of musical notation for the song 'Cheroubicon'. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2. The vocal line begins with a long note on 'We' followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment provides a harmonic foundation with chords and moving lines.

che - - - - - ru - bim, re - pre - sent the che - - - - - ru - bim,

The second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase for 'che - - - - - ru - bim'. The piano accompaniment features a prominent bass line with a low note on 'che' and a rising line.

and — sing to - the Life - giv - ing Tri - - - ni - ty, the

The third system of musical notation. The vocal line has a long note on 'and' followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady bass line.

thrice - ho ly hymn, — thrice - ho ly hymn, sing — the thrice - - -

The fourth system of musical notation. The vocal line has a long note on 'thrice - ho ly hymn' followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a low note on 'thrice'.

ho - - - ly hymn. Let us now — lay a - side — all — earth - ly cares, —

The fifth and final system of musical notation. The vocal line has a long note on 'ho - - - ly hymn' followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a low note on 'ho'.

now lay a - side all earth - ly care, lay a - side

all earth - - - ly care. A - - - - men.

That we may re - ceive the King of all who comes in -

vi - si - bly up - borne by the an - gel - - - - ic host.

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - - - - ia!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 7-8, 1997

Liturgical Singing Seminar, St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, San Diego CA. \$60 registration fee. See page 12 for more information.

May 17, 1997

Liturgical Music Seminar, St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Rochester, NY. "Spirituality and Liturgical Music," Mark Bailey, speaker; information: Mary Smith: (716) 227-9632 or Bonnie Maye-Schwarz e-mail: schwarz@servtech.com

June 22-27, 1997

St. Vladimir's Seminary Summer Institute, Crestwood, NY. "Baptism and Chrismation in the Orthodox Church". For more information: (914) 961-8313

Summer 1997

Choral Techniques Workshop, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY; Rehearsal skills and knowledge of sacred choral literature. Information: Rev. Dn. Andre Papkov, (315) 894-6274.

Summer 1999

Summer School of Liturgical Music, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY. Intensive training for choir director/readers. Full course requires three summers with academic credit available. Information: Rev. Dn. Andre Papkov, (315) 894-6274.

August 21 - 24

12th Annual Sacred Music Institute at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA. Fr. David Barr, guest speaker. For more information see page 11.

From the Editor: This calendar is provided as a service to our readers and we hope that it will expand to include Orthodox music events from around the country. Its importance goes beyond just the advertising of events. We hope it will help inspire regional events throughout the country. We welcome any calendar items to be included in this section. Send them to PSALM Notes, PO Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA 95005.

REVIEWS

Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia

by Vladimir Morosan

©*Musica Russica, Madison, Connecticut, 1995. 396 pp.*

Reviewed by George Vance, Silver Spring, Maryland

Each of us who undertakes to direct Orthodox choral music in America brings to bear the resources of his own experiences, which, unfortunately, do not usually include any disciplined training specific to liturgical music. Opportunities for that type of study are limited and not easily accessible. Our contact with the historical roots of the music we perform has necessarily been haphazard. And so we typically develop our craft with a dearth of practical information, operating upon a repertoire of handed-down material or transcriptions into English produced without reference to original sources or basic understanding of style and techniques.

At last, with the publication of Vladimir Morosan's *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*, we have a book—and a great one—which begins to remedy our ignorance. Apparently it is also a blessing to the renascent church music in Russia itself, being an event comparable to the life's work of Solzhenitsyn: a recla-

mation of history. It is certainly a rare thing for a scholarly work in the field of musicology to have such enormous practical, not to mention devotional, importance.

The book begins by tracing the development of choral singing in Russia, and in the second part discusses choral performance practice in the decades before the Revolution. We learn of such practical matters as Chesnokov's theory of choral sonority; how the characteristic Russian contra-bass doublings were employed; the rehearsal procedures of the great conductors Orlov and Danilin; the stylistic characteristics of Kastalsky, Rachmaninoff, Grechaninov, et al. Throughout the author conveys to us the ethos of an age which produced great music and great musicians for the Church. One hopes the reader will be inspired to emulate the profound seriousness with which those musicians approached their work.

This is a book that must be in the library of every Orthodox choir master alongside Dr. Morosan's earlier translation of Johann von Gardner's *Russian Church Singing, volume 1*. ✚

Available from: Musica Russica, (800)326-3132 or fax (203) 421-3132.

CHOIRS IN THE COMMUNITY

Orthodox Concert Choir of Chicago

John Sutko, Chicago, Illinois

The Orthodox Concert Choir of Chicago was organized in 1994 to prepare a special concert of liturgical compositions by Russian composers for the benefit of the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). They also presented a program for the Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) Convention in Chicago in 1995. Two major concerts were recently presented by the choir for the St. Peter and St. Paul Church Building Fund and to benefit the restoration of the Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow. Both of these concerts raised over \$20,000.

Singers and directors from the Greek, Russian, Serbian, Antiochian, Ukrainian and the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Churches as well as the Orthodox Church in America are represented in this choir. Since members belong to various parish choirs, the Pan-Orthodox Choir of Chicago, the Chicago Deanery Choir, the Hellenic Chorale and the Serbian Singing Society, rehearsals are held at special times throughout the year to prepare for special programs or benefits. The purpose of the Choir to present the beautiful and spiritual compositions of the Orthodox faith with a focus on masterworks and the traditional hymns of Russian Church music. The choir sings in English and in Church Slavonic.

John Sutko is the director of the Orthodox Concert Choir. He is also the director of the St. Peter and St. Paul Orthodox Church Choir of Chicago. Mr. Sutko did his undergraduate and graduate work at the Chicago Teachers College and the Chicago Conservatory of Music where he received both a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degree in Education. Mr. Sutko has served as the Chicago Deanery Choir director, assistant director of the Russian Male Chorus of Chicago and is currently the director of music for the Federated Russian Orthodox Club's National Convention. He also served as secretary/treasurer of the Department of Liturgical Music of the Orthodox Church in America for ten years. ✚

Romeiko Choral Ensemble

Dr. George Bilalis, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Romeiko Ensemble was founded in 1991 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by Dr. George Bilalis who serves as its artistic director and conductor. Its goals are preservation, education and performance of authentic Hellenic (Greek) Music across its 2500 year history, thereby raising awareness and appreciation of the ancient musical system as it has come down to us through the centuries. The Romeiko's main focus is on the restoration and performance of Classical Hellenic music, the exquisite melodies written by 8th-19th century composers of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine era. The music, performed a capella, does not use the five

line staff of western music, but rather has its own notation (*parasemantiki*) originating from the ancient music and uniquely capturing the tonality and nuances of Hellenic music. Romeiko is also participating in research studying the relationship of early Slavonic chant (*znamenny*) with its Byzantine roots. Romeiko also performs Greek folk songs whose tonality and idioms originate in the Byzantine chant. These are performed accompanied by Greek and Near Eastern instruments.

The Romeiko Ensemble has travelled extensively throughout the U.S. as well as internationally.

Dr. Bilalis was born in Athens, Greece, where he grew up immersed in the sounds of traditional Hellenic music. He formally studied music under Simon Karas, the world's foremost expert of Hellenic music and graduated from the Arguroupolis Conservatory. He studied pedagogy and conducting in the U.S. and has a BA in Music. He studied chant with the eminent Archon Protopsaltis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Demetrios Neratzis. During his five years with the Greek Byzantine Choir (EBX) he studied choral conducting with its director Lyk Angelopoulos and performed throughout Europe and the Middle East. Dr. Bilalis is a periodontist and implantologist by profession, holds a MS in molecular microbiology and teaches at NYU. ✚

IOCC Benefit Concert

Alysa Slinkert, Ben Lomond, California

On October 19, 1996, I attended and participated in a Choir Festival in San Jose, California as a fund-raiser for International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). Three churches with five choirs participated. It was a joy to be involved in this fundraiser and to sing with and meet new people. St. Stephen Orthodox Church in Cupertino, with her choir director, Subdeacon Steven Alvarez, hosted of the event. The church is lovely and the choir confident. It was enlightening to learn from Steve, who was also the festival conductor. He had some good ideas for vocal technique, especially for tenors, and showed good communication with the combined choir.

The highlight for me was listening to the two youth choirs perform. They performed both separately and then together as a larger group. The St. Stephen's Youth Choir, with Lucille Belomy conducting, was delightful. There were nine girls who sang confidently and when they sang the Bortniansky "It is Truly Meet," I was sure that angels had joined them. Equally angelic were the Ss. Peter and Paul Youth Choir, under the direction of Alice Hughes, especially when singing "Hymn to the Theotokos" (Byzantine arrangement by V. Hadjinicolaou). It was quite clear that children sing to the Mother of God much more beautifully than us grown-ups!

This was the festival's second year and it was wonderful to have St. Nicholas Church Choir of Saratoga,

See "**CHOIRS**" on page 12

“CHOIRS” continued from page 11

conducted by Alex Prescop, join us. The more people that get involved with such regional activities, the more it is beneficial for all. We gain an opportunity to be together as Orthodox musicians and exchange ideas and music. The extra blessing is the opportunity to raise money for a very worthy cause.

Performances of Orthodox Liturgical Masterworks Dot the American Landscape

Vladimir Morosan, Madison, Connecticut

Even ten years ago, the performance of a major choral work drawn from the Orthodox liturgy was a rare event. Occasionally, some college choir or glee club programmed an “anthem” from the Russian repertoire, but usually the text was so heavily “adapted” that the original liturgical identity of the work was scarcely recognizable. In the last few years, however, the situation has changed dramatically, as American choirs have gained access to new editions of Orthodox sacred choral masterpieces, which enable them to sing these works in the original language and with some degree of understanding of the original liturgical content and context (e.g., the editions of Musica Russica and other publishers).

A major landmark was the appearance of the highly acclaimed recording of Sergei Rachmaninoff’s *All-Night Vigil* (a.k.a. “Vespers”), op. 37, by the Robert Shaw Festival Singers (Telarc 80172), which appeared in 1990 and served to put that masterwork “on the map,” so to speak. In just the last year or two, performances of this work have occurred in a number of cities and regions around the U.S., including Hartford, Connecticut; Oklahoma City; Los Angeles; Columbus, Ohio; San Diego; Boston; and Washington, DC. This coming year performances are already scheduled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Princeton, New Jersey, Baltimore, Maryland, and San Antonio, Texas.

Other major Orthodox liturgical works are being discovered as well. Last fall the Kansas City Chorale performed and recorded Rachmaninoff’s setting of the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, op. 31. (Their CD has just been released on the Nimbus label.) Other performances of Rachmaninoff’s *Liturgy* took place or will be taking place in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Boston. Two years ago, a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland resurrected Gretchaninoff’s majestic setting of the *All-Night Vigil*, op. 59, which had not been performed anywhere since its Russian premiere in 1913; the first American performance took place in Washington, DC. This year premiere American performances are scheduled of Gretchaninoff’s *Passion Week*, op. 58 (Los Angeles and San Diego), Kastalsky’s *Requiem for Fallen Heroes* (Boston), and Ippolitov-Ivanov’s *Liturgy* (Montreal).

Some Orthodox believers express reservations

about the performance of our sacred hymns on a concert stage by performers who are not themselves Orthodox. It should be remembered, however, that in Orthodox Russia there was a long-standing tradition of “sacred concerts” outside the context of liturgical worship. In fact, some of the works mentioned above were composed expressly for such concert occasions, and may even be too grand and complex to be sung in the worship service. The atmosphere at choral concerts in this country tends to be sedate and reverent. Both singers and audiences are intensely aware that they are dealing with music of profound depth and beauty, even if they do not yet fully understand it. But most importantly, for many, the music is their very first encounter with the Orthodox faith and the Orthodox liturgy in *any* form, and for some, this encounter remains unforgettable for the remainder of their lives. This writer is of the opinion that the growing number of performances of Orthodox sacred music in this country is cause for rejoicing, and that they represent a unique opportunity for witnessing and evangelization through the divinely inspired beauty of sacred music. ✚

“CONFERENCES” continued from page 7

4th Annual Liturgical Singing Seminar

The 4th Annual Liturgical Singing Seminar will take place at St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church in San Diego on February 7-8, 1997. The seminar will feature guest speaker Fr. David Barr, who will be teaching the Byzantine tones as set forth in his *St. Romanos Chanter Training Program*, with an introduction for singers of all traditions. Additional speakers will include Steve Butler, Sight-singing and Basic Music Theory; Fr. Michael Carney, The Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts; and Alex Ruggieri, Beginning and Advanced Conducting. Registration is \$60. Call Carole Schumaik, (619) 565-1914 for more information. ✚

PSALM Notes

Managing Editor: Alice Hughes
Associate Editors: Anne Schoepp
 Vladimir Morosan
Resource Editor: Walter G. Obleschuk

The articles and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors. While the editors assume responsibility for the selection of the articles included, the authors assume responsibility for facts and interpretations that appear in their articles.

Are you interested in being the editor for the calendar, conferences, reviews or community activity columns? Let us know.

PSALM Notes, P.O. Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA 95005

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Readers, ~

Thank you for your letters and subscriptions! This is your space. Please feel free to write with your comments, ideas, suggestions for how to make PSALM Notes a better publication. This may also be a forum for discussion of issues that are pertinent to Orthodox Church musicians. We will print letters as space allows.

Many letters were received with subscriptions. Your subscriptions will help PSALM Notes stay in production. We have committed to producing two more issues in 1997. Those issues will only be sent to subscribers because of our limited funds. In other words, if you have not subscribed, this is the last issue you will receive.

We would encourage you to share your first two issues with other choir directors and also with your choirs and clergy. We believe PSALM Notes is a publication for them as well and that each director, choir member and clergy should also have a subscription.

Send in calendar items for inclusion, as well as reviews for events in your area and/or conferences you have attended, or ideas for articles you would like to see. Please don't wait for us to call you. We welcome your submissions and will use them as space allows. Thank you for your support and prayers.

~ The Editors

Dear Alice,

I want to thank you for sending me a copy of the first issue of PSALM Notes. I am very pleased with the results. The layout, the design, and everything about it is first class. If this first issue is an indication of things to come, I am very much looking forward to the subsequent issues.

This newsletter is just what we need in our parishes. So often our choirs and chanters feel isolated and left out. But with your wonderful publication, they will soon lose that sense of isolation and rejoice at being a part of a very large and very wonderful family of church musicians.

Please accept my heartiest congratulations. You have my whole-hearted support and encouragement in this endeavor. Please extend my congratulations and encouragement to your Associate Editors, Anne Schoepp and Vladimir Morosan, as well. God bless all of you in this great task you have undertaken!

With the assurance of my prayers for you and your families, I am,

In His service, +Bishop DEMETRI,
Auxiliary Bishop
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

Dear Alice and Anne,

Just a note to commend you on your efforts at putting together PSALM Notes. It is encouraging to know

that you have the vision and energies to organize and support such a needed effort. My best wishes. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of service.

You may, in the future wish to consider including a one page sheet of music in the newsletter. The Moscow Patriarchate adds one page to their journal and I must admit, as a choir director, this is the page I turn to first. Vlad Morosan did this with the Sacred Art Journal for a few issues before it assumed new editors.

Michael G. Farrow—Vienna, VA

Dear Alice and Anne:

Thank you for the wonderful copy of the PSALM Notes. It was certainly a pleasure to read the first edition and it was worth waiting for. I wish you the best with this publication and with the forthcoming editions. Enclosed is my subscription.

I am also sending you something about the special choir that we are proud to have developing in the Chicago area. I hope that you could possibly place the article in the "Choirs in the Community" section of one of the future publications.

Again, thank you and God bless you and may He keep you and your families in the best of health as you continue your wonderful work for the music of the Orthodox Church.

Yours in Christ our Lord,
John Sutko—Chicago, IL

Dear Mrs. Hughes,

I would like to congratulate you for the marvellous idea to gather all together the musicians of the Orthodox Church. We would like to participate in PSALM and share our expertise with the rest of you. Orthodox Liturgical Music is in a vague point in the States, especially for the Greek Archdiocese. I hope that PSALM Notes will be the trigger to the professionals to dig the musical roots of the chant and stick to it.

At the first issue I saw that you are looking for editors for certain sections. If you think we can shorten our geographical distance with communications, then I'll be glad to collaborate with you. I enclose the Romeiko's presentation folder. We await your news and ideas.

Sincerely yours,
Dr. Yioryos Bilalis, DDS, MS
Professor of Eastern Chant
Domesticus of the Romeiko Ensemble, Inc.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing the information about our conference in your newsletter. We really appreciated it. Enclosed are registration forms if you know of anyone that would be interested in attending the conference.

Sincerely, the 1996 ROLMC Committee

Dear Alice and Anne,

I just got the PSALM Notes newsletter—great job! His Grace Bishop BASIL's article is particularly good

and I plan to share it with our choir. I'm also interested in the videos from the conference last February which I was unfortunately unable to attend. I'm sending a donation that hopefully will cover the video and the newsletter. If there's any left over leave it for PSALM as a donation. If I'm short then let me know so I can send more.

Of interest I noticed the IOCC Benefit Concert is scheduled in October this year. I'd like to know when because we have two possible conflicts. The first is a benefit concert that Slavyanka will be putting on to benefit our parish on October 5th. They will be singing a work written by their director, Alexei Shipovalnikov, his "Vigil" along with the Peninsula Women's Chorus, it should be a great concert. Please let me know the dates of the IOCC event as soon as you can.

I wish you the Lord's blessings on your unending labors in Orthodox music.

With love in our All-merciful Savior,
Alex Prescop—Mountain View, CA

Dear Ms. Hughes,

Congratulations on the first issue of "PSALM Notes"! I read it with great interest, and was particularly pleased to see the Summer School of Liturgical Music at Jordanville and the 10th Annual Russian Orthodox Liturgical Music at San Francisco listed, as the Orthodox Benevolent Fund has expended a fair amount of resources to support these two projects over the last several years. Both projects have had a considerable positive impact on the level of liturgical practice in parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, especially the Summer School of Liturgical Music. Both are open to participants from all Orthodox jurisdictions and English is the common language. It is a little-known fact that English is used exclusively or predominantly in nearly three-quarters of the parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russian in the U.S.

I will try to persuade Matushka Doreen Bartholomew, who is a first-year student at the Summer School in Jordanville, and whose husband is a priest in the O.C.A., to write a brief review for your next issue. I will be a third-year student, and my home parish's new choir director, who is still a catechumen(!), but who has an M.A. from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music) is entering the first year program.

I am also enclosing a list of members of our Church (jurisdiction) who might be interested in receiving and/or contributing to PSALM Notes. All of these people are intensely interested in how to root the tradition of Orthodox liturgical singing (particularly in its Slavic incarnation) in the English language Orthodox mission here in America.

Again, thank you for undertaking this endeavor. May our Lord find it pleasing in His sight.

With love in Christ,
David M. James
Director, Orthodox Benevolent Fund, Rye, NH

Dear Alice,

May God bless you and your family!

I keep telling myself that I will write you a real letter—no, this isn't it!—about my impression of the music conference in Ben Lomond and other assorted musical matters. A business trip recently brought me up to San Francisco, and on the way back I stopped off with some friends at Conciliar Press. Sorry I didn't get a chance to connect with you.

The stopover at Ben Lomond reminded me of the conference up there, and of the very special friendships made and renewed there. Once again, thank you for the work that you, Anne and so many others did in making that conference happen.

I was also grateful to receive the sample copy of PSALM Notes. It is a very impressive first offering. I was very gratified to see Bishop Basil's talk printed there; it does a lot to set the tone for the magazine, and to remind us of the real orientation of our work. Also, it was very good to see Walter Obleschuk's name associated with the magazine. Walter is an extremely dedicated church musician, who is firmly rooted in the tradition and knows how to make use of 'treasures old and new' in an American idiom. Keep up the good work. I DO hope to see you face to face some time in the future. Till then, some "wish list" sort of questions:

1. Would there ever be room in PSALM Notes for short compositions or setting of hymns?

2. Maybe reviews of non-liturgical music every so often? I'm thinking of some of the VERY interesting music of John Tavener and Arvo Pärt, which, while not exactly liturgical, nevertheless draws on melodies and themes from the Orthodox hymnographic tradition. Have you heard Tavener's "The Protecting Veil"? Friends of mine from England say that, when it was premiered by the BBC Orchestra, the audience sat in absolute silence for over 2 minutes when it ended—something unheard of before.

3. As far as conferences go, I'd rather always have them in Ben Lomond (but this is evidently impractical.) Some thoughts. First, maybe a workshop or computer software systems—if this would be conducive to actual learning. A nice idea, maybe—but I haven't the slightest how to make it really useful and practical. Second, maybe some informal "concertizing" one evening. Thirdly, more time. A week would be great, but perhaps impractical. Some more time would enable more in-depth teaching to go on, particularly needed by folks in the smaller parishes.

That's all for now I sure hope that I'll be seeing you face to face in the near future. All my love to your family.

In Christ,
Fr. Michael Carney—Hollywood, CA

MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

Orthodox Music on the World Wide Web

This is the first in what we hope will become an ever-expanding series of listings of sites on the World Wide Web of interest to Orthodox church musicians. At present the list is not large, which means there is definite potential for expansion and growth. Readers comments and submissions are welcome.

- <http://alize.ere.umontreal.ca/~giannoun/www/byz.htm> - Byzantine music
- <http://www.igl.ku.dk/MMB/> - Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae has information about manuscripts and publications of Byzantine chant.
- <http://www.musicarussica.com> - Musica Russica has over 150 CDs (mostly Orthodox church music) described, reviewed and rated; also Orthodox sheet music, books and journals of interest to Orthodox church musicians
- http://web2.airmailnet/saint_nicholas/nvalaam/tonetype.htm - New Valaam Trading Company has general articles about Orthodoxy, including some about church music (i.e. "The Tonal System of the Orthodox Church", teaching tapes, and more.)
- <http://www.bcl.net/~nikolai/kliros/kliros.html> - The Orthodox Bard has a visually beautiful page that contains Orthodox poetry, lives of Saints, icons, and links to Orthodox music sites.
- [http://www.oct.org/Orthodox Page/resource/faq.tape.html](http://www.oct.org/Orthodox%20Page/resource/faq.tape.html) - The Orthodox Page has a catalogue of church music and teaching cassette tapes, focusing primarily on Russia and other Slavic countries
- <http://gray.music.rhodes.edu/musichtmls/Music120.html> - Rhodes College has a stunningly beautiful page designed as a resource for a college course on Orthodoxy and music in Russia and Slavic countries of Eastern Europe
- <http://www.comet.chv.va.us/seraphim> - Three Children in the Fiery Furnace has, amidst discussions of various Orthodox youth issues, Slavonic hymns in audio format, which can be downloaded and listened to (with the appropriate software, available on-line)

Editor's note: Is anyone out there interested in working up a home page for PSALM? It could include copies of PSALM Notes and...

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